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HOCKEY: Seven-year deal gives junior B club exclusive rights to arena concession

Pirates sign lease with Pelham

BERND FRANKE
QMI Agency Niagara

It's official. Junior B hockey's Pirates are now the Pelham Pirates, and they could be for as long as the next eight years.

The final hurdle to Tim Toffolo moving his Greater Ontario Junior Hockey League franchise from Port Colborne was cleared when Pelham town council unanimously approved a lease between the team and the municipality.

The lease, which commits the Pirates to paying the "going minor hockey" rate for ice time for games and practices at Pelham Arena for the next two years and at a new arena for five years after that, includes an option for an additional year if a new arena is not completed before the 2017-18 season, Mayor Dave Augustyn said.

A lease that will allow the team to operate the concession stand commits the municipality to renting a portable building at a cost of $22,000 annually that will serve as a dedicated dressing room for the Pirates. Visiting junior B teams will have the use two of the existing dressing rooms.

See PIRATES on Page 2

SUPPLIED PHOTO

Front row, from left, Pelham Minor Hockey Association Byron Sinclair, Pelham Pirates owner Tim Toffolo, Mayor Dave Augustyn, deputy clerk Jordan Mammolit; back row, Coun. Catherine King, Coun. Jim Durley, Coun. Richard Rybiak, Coun. Jim Lane, chief administrative officer Darren Ottaway and Coun. Peter Papp take part in a signing ceremony after town council unanimously approved a lease between the junior B hockey team and the municipality.

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UPFRONT

■ COMMUNITIES IN BLOOM

Searching for Pelham's best gardens

ALLAN BENNER
QMI Agency Niagara

It hasn't been the best summer for gardeners.

But Pelham's recreation, culture and wellness co-ordinator Jessica Ruddell said local gardeners have not allowed the late spring and cooler weather to prevent them from beautifying the community.

The Town of Pelham will be celebrating the most beautiful gardens in the community with its annual Communities in Bloom Trillum Awards.

Ruddell said several of the town's most beautiful gardens were featured during a "really successful" garden tour earlier this year.

"We saw some great properties" during the tour, she said.

"The residents of Pelham do an outstanding job taking care of their properties, and this event is just to recognize all their hard work."

She said people are being invited to nominate their favourite gardens for awards, whether it's their own or a friends or neighbour until Aug. 7, by calling her at 905-892-2607 ext. 341.

People can also pick up nomination forms at the town office. As of Monday, she said people can also download nomination forms from the town's website: www.pelham.ca.

"Anyone from the public is welcome to nominate someone," she said.

The competition includes nine categories such as residential, commercial, professional, multi-residential, schools and churches, to name a few.

Ruddell said the weather this year did have an impact on gardeners.

"I would guess that the growing season started really slow in Pelham, but I think it's recovering well with the warm weather that we've had."

She said the committee delayed the deadline for nominations for one week to accommodate the slow start to the season.

"Hopefully it will give everybody a chance to make their property beautiful and win an award, potentially," Ruddell said.

Winning gardens will be announced during an awards ceremony Sept. 9 at the Pelham Library's Festival Room.

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■ PIRATES

Concessions revenue addressed in deal

From Page 1

In an interview, Augustyn justified using tax dollars to pay for a portable that will be used exclusively by only one user group by pointing out a provision in the lease agreement safeguards the town's investment. Clause 2.4 states "in the event that the licensee (the Pirates) should terminate this licence prior to the expiration of this (seven-year) agreement, then the licensee shall sign all such documents as are necessary to effect the transfer of ownership and control of the junior B hockey team to the licensor (the town), subject to Ontario Hockey Association approval, so that the licensor could operate the junior B hockey team utilizing a community board."

"The change rooms at the Pelham Arena are very very small and could not accommodate the team. Nor could we have offered exclusive rights to any of those existing change rooms," the mayor said. "Council saw that providing a changeroom to the Pirates is no different than in other communities with junior B teams."

Augustyn said the Pirates didn't receive favourable treatment in getting concession operating rights in exchange for a "nominal fee" totalling about $2,000 annually.

"It would be what we normally would get for the concession," he said.

Augustyn said no community group would be usurped by the Pirates coming in and taking over the concession stand at the Pelham's lone arena. He pointed out the absence of a contractor last year left operating the concession up to the town.

Toffolo, who operated the Westside Arena for about eight years before moving into Port Colborne's new arena 1 1/2 year ago, said getting concession rights from Pelham wasn't a deal breaker to the signing lease, "but it is a big bonus for us."

"It's a huge thing. It's a big part of being able to run a non-profit organization," the Pirates owner said.

He pointed out that achieving a greater degree of revenue certainty is important in hockey programs that follow the development model rather than the pay-for-play model. Many teams, Toffolo said, count on bingos for fundraising, while others share in the revenue from rinkboard advertising.

"It really makes junior hockey viable," he said.

Toffolo's team will play as the Pelham Pirates in the first season in their new home, but he didn't rule out some day changing the name to Panthers, the nickname used by Pelham's minor hockey teams.

"We intend to stay much longer than eight years. We want to become part of the community," said Toffolo, a Welland real estate agent.

Augustyn called getting a junior B team a boon for the town of 14,500.

"It's a great opportunity for the town and for the players in this town. It makes sense for our community to have a team."

The Pirates, who opted to relocate rather than compete for fans with a new tier 2 junior A team that will begin playing out of Port Colborne's Vale Centre, had already received "wholehearted support" from the Ontario Hockey Association for their move to Pelham.

"We're not happy about leaving a community but, at the end of the day, the people who pay the bills have to make decisions in the best interests of their teams," chief executive officer Scott Farley said.

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BERND FRANKE/QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

Only one side of Pelham Arena has seating for hockey fans. Making up most of the other side are the two benches, the penalty boxes, with some standing room along the boards and behind the net.

ROTARY EXCHANGE: Gracie Lowes spends a year in the land of the rising sun

Challenges welcomed during trip to Japan

GREG FURMINGER
QMI Agency Niagara

Gracie Lowes proudly displays a large flag on which well-wishes are scrawled in both Japanese and English.

It's among her favourite keepsakes of a year spent in Kanzanawa, a humid city of 462,000 people on the west coast of Japan.

From her life-altering trip, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Welland and the international organization's youth exchange program, the 16-year-old also returned to her Fonthill home with a pair of shoes similar to those worn by ancient Samuris of that Sea of Japan region — although these ones feature a hip cheetah print — plus an assortment of chopsticks and a scrapbook made by her new acquaintances, the latter which she says is a traditional gift.

From a land where almost anything can be bought from a vending machine, she also brought home a can of coffee for her dad, who, with wife Catharine, owns Mahtay Cafe in downtown St. Catharines.

When she departed last August, the Ridley College student who enters Grade 11 in September — she took summer school and online courses before she left so when she returned she wouldn't have to start the year behind in 10th grade — knew little about the Japanese language. She can now read "mostly basic Japanese" — two of its three main alphabets.

"I can speak basic conversational Japanese. My grammar's not on-point, but I can understand a conversation," says the teen who returned home two weeks ago.

She struggled with the language for about the first seven months while abroad, at times finding herself — very chatty during this interview — going long stretches without saying a word.

"For the first six months, I spent a lot of time by myself in the library."

She says that solitude was a very positive experience, despite the sometimes loneliness.

"I think you learn a lot about yourself that way."

That's partly what her journey was about, and why she picked Japan of all countries to visit (her older sister, Zoey, leaves in one month for a Rotary exchange trip to France).

"I just really wanted something as obscure as possible. I didn't want to be bored," Gracie says of her challenges, quickly adding, "I was never bored in Japan."

During her time there, she stayed with four host families.

"It allowed me to learn not just the culture, but individual lifestyles," she says.

A poignant part of her trip included a bond with an elder. He and Gracie exchanged no words. Their common interest was to play music together, Gracie skilled on the ukulele and guitar.

Tears were shed during their goodbye.

"I told him in Japanese, 'You became my grandpa now.'"

On a teenage level, music was also a great starting point to start younger friendships. Her love of The Beatles went a long way — and she came home with a new interest in the bands her dad can appreciate, such as Supertramp.

Gracie is now also now big into karaoke — which proved not only fun and entertaining, but educational, as she could sing words in Japanese and pick up their English equivalents based on the verses with which she's familiar.

For the locals, Gracie, one of only four Rotary exchange students in Kanzawana during her stay, became someone of interest. Strangers would take photos of her, post them to Twitter and Facebook. They wanted to touch her hair. They were curious about the Caucasian girl.

"They wanted to hear the way I say things or do things," she says, noting particular requests to say tomato and eat ice cream.

The girl who plans to become a documentary filmmaker had started documenting her trip at www.gracielowes.com.

In an entry Oct. 3, called A Little About My Struggles, she wrote: "I came to Japan hoping to be pushed out of a comfort zone that I have rarely in my life been push out of and lets (sic) just say not only have I left my comfort zone, but I have stepped out of it crumpled it up and thrown away."

She also writes of lantern festivals and typhoons, but being swept up in all the new and pleasurable experiences, her ambitious plans to keep an active blog started to fall by the wayside. With no regrets.

Some experiences can be viewed on her YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/channel/UCn2wfL11HxLuS3lvKqMcvnQ which features videos of an excursion to Okinawa, a Japanese cooking class, rice harvesting, Geishas and markets.

Year round she would catch a bus at 6:30 a.m. for a 90-minute trek to school. She'd end the day at her guest homes at about 7 p.m.

Meals were served with surprises along the way.

"I thought I was going to be eating sushi every day," she quips.

Often she would eat oden, a soy-based broth to which is commonly added vegetables and boiled eggs, but may also include octopus and fish eyes. The traditional meals she consumed included rice, whole fish and miso soup.

On a bad week, she says, she would meet up with friends at the city's lone Subway or McDonald's restaurants. It was "weird," she says, to be sitting in the land of Samuris, and their ancient relics, eating fast food fries.

"It's a really beautiful city. Even though it's so old, it is big and modern."

Gracie plans to maintain her Japanese speaking skills by turning to Skype to chat online with new friends. But she's not sure at this moment if she'll go back to the land of the rising sun. Another adventure may have her name on it somewhere else.

"Now that I've seen Japan, it's sort of started the travel bug," Gracie says.

She's been a "tourist" before during trips to other countries, "but it's a whole different life being a resident."

"It was a really positive experience."

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PelhamNEWS

Published by PelhamNEWS, Sun Media Corp.
228 East Main St., Welland, ON L3B 5P5
Tel: 905-732-2414 ext.246 Fax: 905-732-3660

e-mail: welland.tribune@sunmedia.ca
John Tobon, PUBLISHER, PRINT & DIGITAL
Peter Conradi, MANAGING EDITOR

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COMMENT

Junior B Pirates coming to Pelham

MAYOR DAVE AUGUSTYN

During its meeting last Monday, town council signed a multi-year lease with the Pelham Pirates Junior B Hockey Club and officially welcomed them to the community.

After receiving the go-ahead from the Ontario Hockey Association, the Pelham Pirates (formally known as the Port Colborne Pirates) will move into Pelham Arena for the 2014/15 and 2015/16 seasons.

The Pelham Pirates will be one of 27 Greater Ontario Junior Hockey League teams within the Niagara region and southwestern Ontario. Pirate home games will be on Friday nights, with the option of Tuesday night games when necessary.

Town staff met with various arena user groups and there is unanimous support for the team's relocation to Pelham. While it will mean that some ice users will have to shift rental times or rent more out-of-town ice, all welcomed the Pirates. For instance, Byron Sinclair, president of Pelham Minor Hockey, said during our council meeting: "We are behind you with whatever you need."

Because they are part of minor hockey, the Pelham Pirates will pay the minor hockey rates for ice. (We understand that Junior B teams in other jurisdictions either pay minor hockey rates, or get their ice time for free.)

The Pirates will also operate the concession at Pirate games, during other minor hockey games, and public skates; they will rent the concession at our normal rate. This is actually a benefit for the town; over the past couple of years, the town operated the concession at a loss because we could not find a business or not-for-profit to operate it.

Like in other cities or towns with Junior B teams, the town will provide a dressing room for the Pirates. (Last week, council approved the rental of a temporary trailer for the Pirate change room at a cost not to exceed $22,240.) Visiting Junior B teams will use two arena dressing rooms.

The lease agreement between the town and the Pirates also contains important provisions like what happens if there's a failure to pay, how the Pirates might transition to a community team, and the flexibility required in hope that the town attracts the grants and financing needed to build a new potential community centre. (You can review the agreement on the town's website at www.pelham.ca/press-release/town-of-pelham-welcomes-pirates-junior-b-hockey-club.)

For more information about the new Pelham Pirates, please check out their website at www.pelhampirates.com.

Junior B hockey gives us something else to celebrate about our community. Council and I are excited about this great opportunity for the town and for Pelham minor hockey players and fans.

You may contact Mayor Dave at mayordave@pelham.ca with questions or to suggest future topics. Check out links for documents and past columns at www.pelhammayordave.blogspot.com.

Shipwrecks – Ambassador

SKIP GILLHAM
For QMI Agency Niagara

On Sept. 12, 2013, fire broke out aboard the *Pramudita* while unloading coal at Banten, Indonesia.

The damage was reported as extensive.

The 31-year old freighter is a product of Port Weller Dry Docks and was built at the St. Catharines shipyard in 1983. It originally served Upper Lakes Shipping as *Canadian Ambassador* but later became *Ambassador* for their deep sea subsidiary of Marbulk Carriers. The ship was chartered to Algoma Central Corp. for part of 2000 and sailed as *Algosea* before becoming *Ambassador* again at the end of the year.

The 222.5-metre-long self-unloader left for the Far East in 2012 after being purchased by Caraka Tirta Pratama Pvt. of Indonesia. There are no reports of the ship being repaired or having gone for scrap to this date.

PHOTO: MAY 23, 1994 RENE BEAUCHAMP

Ambassador

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SMOKING CESSATION

Smoking is the most PREVENTABLE cause of disease and death. In Canada, 45, 000 people die annually, and as many as half of all smokers will die due to tobacco use. Smoking is known to cause various types of cancer, COPD, heart disease, stroke and many other conditions such as influenza, peptic ulcers, osteoporosis, thyroid disease and cataracts.

There are 2 primary options to smoking cessation; Cold Turkey or Medication. There have been many success stories of patients able to quit cold turkey, however it is much more difficult and shown to have an increased rate of relapse. It may be the most cost effective option, but these people suffer greatly from nicotine withdrawal symptoms, which include irritability, anger, restlessness, impatience, difficulty concentrating, depression and anxiety.

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) is available over-the-counter in 4 forms; gum, patch, inhaler, and lozenge. There are different dosages available which is dependent on the amount of cigarettes the individual smokes. If you have questions regarding which dose you should start on and the proper technique to use the NRT, please speak to your pharmacist for assistance.

NRT provides nicotine in a safe form so the body does not have to endure nicotine withdrawal while a person adapts to not smoking. As opposed to cigarettes, NRT are medications that contain only nicotine and not the other harmful chemicals that are present in cigarettes. NRT is considered a 'step down' approach where the patient is exposed to a gradual decrease in the amount of nicotine in the blood. This enables the body to adjust to the changes in a slow and steady manner and experience less side effects.

The most commonly prescribed medication available for smoking cessation is Champix (Varenicline). Champix has recently been shown to have great success for smoking cessation. It works by binding to the same receptors as nicotine, which results in decreased cravings and withdrawal symptoms. Additionally, it decreases the pleasure that people get from smoking making the quitting process that much more effective.

Although there are medications and therapeutic options available, the single most important smoking cessation aid is a patients' will and determination to quit.

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LOCALNEWS

Niagara ambulance calls rising

BRIAN BATY
For QMI Agency Niagara

Niagara Region's public health and social services committee debated at length a staff report from Niagara Emergency Medical Services that proposes to increase the number of ambulances and paramedics in Niagara.

Call volumes and call response times are constantly monitored and compared to benchmark data from around the province.

In the recent past there have been minor adjustments to the ambulance fleet and paramedics. Two took place in Port Colborne and Fort Erie with the elimination of emergency services at the local hospitals. Another adjustment took place in Wainfleet by assigning a roving vehicle and a paramedic to quickly respond to calls in Wainfleet or be redirected to other centres if they experienced an extraordinary call volume.

Another factor affecting ambulance service has been called the "off-load delay" factor. That is the time that an ambulance has to remain at a hospital until the patient is admitted. Co-operative efforts with tNiagara Health System have reduced this burden by approximately two-thirds.

The report noted that there have been steadily increasing call volumes over the years that require service enhancements.

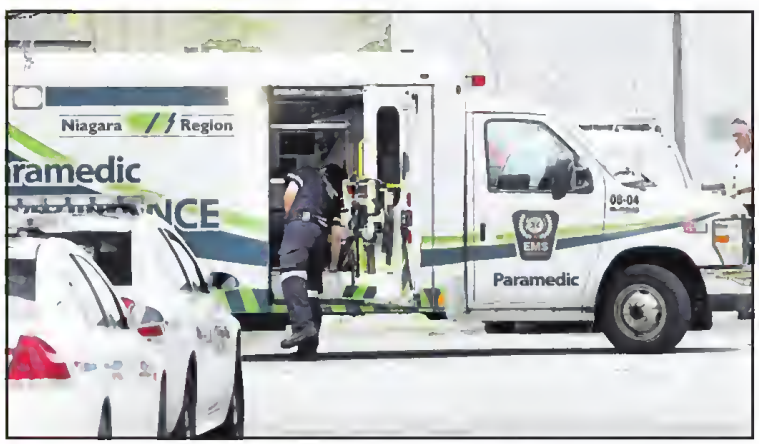
This increase is sizeable due, in part, to our aging demographics. An earlier report on the future of long-term care facilities noted that by 2031 Niagara would see a 72% increase in the seniors population above 75 years of age. The service increase requested by EMS was for the addition of two 24-hour ambulance crews requiring 16 new paramedics as well as two supervisors followed by a second addition of two 24-hour ambulance crews with 16 new paramedics, two operations supervisors and two logistical/ regulatory staff.

As a regional council, we have been very cautious about budget increases over the years keeping annual tax increases below the rate of inflation. Needless to say, these proposed increases are costly and required considerable debate.

The final recommendation to regional council was broken into stages. We did support the first addition of two new crews and supervisors for September 2014 but directed that the funding come from the Land Ambulance Severance Reserve. We also directed staff to plan for the ongoing operational impact of this recommendation which is $1.1 million during the 2015 budget process. This effectively puts the final decision in the hands of the new regional council following municipal elections this October.

Council was very sensitive to the budgetary impact but also respectful of a new council's mandate. It also felt that the final implementation would benefit from the data collected starting this September with the addition of 18 staff. There was an attempt to defer the second round of additional resources to 2016 but the final vote recommended that staff plan for the 2015 budget with the second implementation to commence in September 2015. The new regional council may continue this plan or may request a report on the first round results before proceeding with round two or defer until a future date.

Brian Baty is a regional councillor for Pelham and co-chair of the public health and social services committee. E-mail: brian.baty@niagararegion.ca.



BOB TYMCZYSZYN / QMI AGENCY NIAGARA

Niagara Region's public health and social services committee members have agreed to an increase in 18 Niagara Emergency Services personnel later in 2014.

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Recreation Programs & Classes

Zumba Classes @ Pelham Arena

Tuesday August 5 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm Wednesday August 6 7:30 pm – 8:30 pm

Aqua Zumba @ Pelham Community Pool

Monday August 4 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm Wednesday August 6 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

Drop in and try any session for $6 or purchase your 10 + 2 bonus passes for $60. For more information on any of the Zumba classes, please contact (905) 892-2607 ext. 329.

Walking Club - Everyone is welcome! – August 5 & 7

Interested in walking in Pelham? Interested in joining a Walking Club? Then join us! Tuesdays at Pelham Arena from 9-10 am and Thursdays at Fonthill Bandshell from 9-10:30 am. For more information, please contact (905) 892-2607 ext. 329.

Summer Programs – Aquatics & Summer Camps

Our Summer Programs have limited availability. Registration is still available for swimming lessons, Summer Day Camps, Playground Program, Specialty Camps: Bike Camp; Art Camp; Sports Camp; You're the Chef Camp. Registration forms are available at pelham.ca and at Town Hall.

Community Events & News

Pelham Farmers' Market – May 1 until October 30 - Pelham Town Square – July 24 - Market Bucks Winner: Eddie Scram

Come out and meet your local market vendors and purchase food that is fresh, high in quality and the next best thing to harvesting it yourself. Every Thursday from May 1 to October 30, 4:30pm till dusk.

Free (((Wi-Fi))) available @ Peace Park in Fonthill. Be sure to check it out when attending any summer events or taking a stroll through the park!

NOMINATIONS NOW AVAILABLE for the 2014 TRILLIUM AWARDS!! - Nomination forms available at Pelham Town Hall or at pelham.ca. All nominations are due by August 7, 2014. Awards Ceremony to take place on Tuesday, September 9, 2014 in the Pelham Library Festival Room.

The Village of Fenwick celebrated its 160th Anniversary in June 2013. Now you have the opportunity to be a part of Fenwick's future. **Purchase a granite brick to be incorporated into the downtown Fenwick beautification project.** Standard, double, veteran's and cororate bricks are available. Visit pelham.ca for detials or come in to Town Hall (20 Pelham Town Square, Fonthill, L0S 1E0).

POLICE: Found and stolen property posted to NRP website

Cops use web to reunite bikes, owners

MARYANNE FIRTH
QMI Agency Niagara

Of the hundreds of lost and stolen bicycles that come into police possession each year, most go unclaimed.

Instead of being reunited with their rightful owners, many of the bikes sit in storage before being sent to auction.

It's a trend Niagara Regional Police are hoping to see less of through a new strategy that's meant to reunite people with their lost or stolen property.

Photos of select items waiting to be claimed will now be listed on the NRP's website and promoted through its Facebook and Twitter accounts. Only items that are in good condition and working order will be posted.

Pictures will be carefully taken so as to not reveal unique identifiers that may help a person to prove ownership, said NRP Sgt. Drew Wallace. A bike, for instance, may have a unique scratch or sticker the owner can describe to police.

"We're looking for characteristics only the owner would know about," he said, adding officers need to have a level of comfort that the item is being given to the correct person.

The best identifier is a serial number.

"But most people don't know the serial numbers on their property," Wallace said. He encouraged people to write the information down for storage in a safe place.

"Officers work to identify the rightful owners, but too often we're unable to determine who the true owner is," he said.

That task is made even more difficult when a theft is not reported, which is often the case with stolen bikes.

"They just assume when it's gone, it's gone," Wallace said.

"They just accept the loss and either replace the bike or move on."

His words of wisdom: "Make sure you report it."

Reporting stolen property can even be done online at www.niagarapolice.ca.

Items seized during an investigation remain in the possession of police until the matter is concluded in court and the appeal period has lapsed.

Found items, as well as those that have cleared the appeal period, are kept in storage for 90 days and then sent to auction if unclaimed. This excludes bikes, which are only kept for 30 days before hitting the auction block due to sheer volume.

Along with bikes, backpacks filled with personal items — but no identification — also tend to fill the NRP's seven property units.

The St. Catharines unit alone has brought in 2,628 items since the beginning of 2014.

"We want to reunite people with their property," Wallace said.

"The organization does not want to make money off property, we want to return items to the people who own them."

The NRP's property facilities are scheduled to be consolidated into a single unit within the new police headquarters in Niagara Falls, which is under construction.

District offices will continue to be used as drop-off and pick-up locations for property.

"This is us progressing as an organization," Wallace said of the new online initiative.

"This is the NRP continuing to fulfil its mandate to the people of Niagara."

The property list is available at www.niagarapolice.ca/en/community/Found-Property.asp.

maryanne.firth@sunmedia.ca
Twitter: @mfirthTribune

Vote 2014 Pelham

NOTICE OF ELECTION INFORMATION - MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ACT, 1996 (S.40)

Pelham Municipal Election Day
Monday, October 27, 2014

NOTICE is hereby given to the Municipal Electors of the Town of Pelham, Regional Municipality of Niagara, that nominations may be filed on any day in the year of the regular election at a time when the Clerk's office is open, weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Nominations may be submitted up to and including Nomination Day, which is Friday, September 12, 2014. On Nomination Day, nominations shall only be accepted between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. in accordance with The Act.

Nominations are to be submitted in the prescribed form, accompanied by a Declaration of Qualification, also in the prescribed form, signed by the person being nominated and accompanied by the applicable fee. As of the date of creation of this Notice, the fee is $200 for the Office of Mayor, and $100 for all other Offices and may be paid by cash, debit, certified cheque, or money order. Proof of citizenship and qualifying address will be required.

Nominations will be accepted for the following offices:

MAYOR & MEMBER OF REGIONAL COUNCIL
(One elected at large within Town of Pelham)

COUNCILLOR, WARD 1
(Two to be elected)

COUNCILLOR, WARD 2
(Two to be elected)

COUNCILLOR, WARD 3
(Two to be elected)

MEMBER OF REGIONAL COUNCIL
(One elected at large within Town of Pelham

SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEE
English Language Public District School Board of Niagara #22 School Board
(combined area of Thorold and Pelham – Returning Officer to be determined)

SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEE
English Language Catholic District School Board #50 School Board
(combined area of Grimsby, Pelham, Lincoln & West Lincoln – Returning Officer to be determined)

SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEE
French Language Public District Board #58 School Board
Conseil Scolaire Viamonde
(Combined Area: Welland, Niagara Falls, Port Colborne, Thorold, Fort Erie, Grimsby, Pelham & Wainfleet – Returning Officer to be determined)

SCHOOL BOARD TRUSTEE
French Language Separate District Board #64 School Board
Conseil Scolaire de District Catholique Centre-Sud
(Combined Area: Thorold, Welland, Niagara Falls, Pelham, Port Colborne, Fort Erie, Wainfleet – Returning Officer to be determined)

Notice dated at the Town of Pelham this 31st day of July, 2014

Town of Pelham • Nancy J. Bozzato • Town Clerk & Returning Officer • (905) 892-2607 ext. 315 • njbozzato@pelham.ca

LOCALNEWS

■ STUDY

Mosquito hunter

ROB HOULE
QMI Agency Niagara

It's a love-hate relationship — mosquitoes love us, we can't stand them.

Well, most humans can't stand them, Bryan Giordano being an exception.

The 24-year-old Brock University PhD student says while we humans consider them pests that could potentially spread disease, mosquitoes have some redeeming qualities — bats, birds, fish and other creatures consider them lunch.

These days, however, Giordano's days are occupied with the bad side of mosquitoes — the transmission of diseases.

He is part of mosquito expert and Brock professor Fiona Hunter's team of graduate students studying the pests. While most people do their darndest to avoid mosquitoes, Giordano is charged with attracting and catching them. He does get to kill them, though.

He said the study, which began in May, is to identify which mosquitoes in Ontario are the most efficient at transmitting West Nile virus.

Of the 60 species of mosquitoes found in the province, Giordano said 13 are known carriers of West Nile virus, which they can transmit to humans via the bug's proboscis (the straw from which it sucks our blood).

"That's kind of important to note. A lot of people think all mosquitoes are out to get them, but that's not really true," Giordano said.

Mosquitoes get the virus after feeding on an infected bird. While most people infected with the virus — 70% to 80%, according to Health Canada — will show no symptoms, others will develop flu-like conditions such as fever, headache, mild rash and body aches.

Health Canada says fewer than 1% of people infected have severe symptoms that affect the central nervous system and could result in death, if the person's immune system has been compromised by chronic diseases like cancer, diabetes, alcoholism and heart disease.

Giordano has been trapping mosquitoes in the Beaverdams and Decew Rds. area of Thorold.

To catch full-grown mosquitoes, he uses a contraption called a CDC trap, which uses light, heat and carbon dioxide to live-trap "host-seeking" female mosquitoes. They are frozen at a lab to kill them, then identified under a microscope and tested for viruses.

Only the females are "host-seeking" blood suckers. The males dine on sugar sources, such as tree sap and plant nectar.

A female will lay anywhere from 50 to 300 eggs at one time in stagnant water. From the eggs emerge larva, which can be seen swimming in rain barrels or other vessels that contain stagnant water.

In one to two weeks, depending on water temperature, the larva morph into pupa, which then breach the water to take flight and wreak havoc on humans.

"The males will pop out first, then the females," Giordano said.

BOB TYMCZYSZYN/STAFF PHOTO

Brock student Bryan Giordano sets up a mosquito trap near Lake Gibson in Thorold.

He said mosquitoes that don't die prematurely by the swat of a hand or a collision with a windshield live to the ripe old age of three to five weeks.

In addition to West Nile virus, mosquitoes in Ontario can give dogs heartworm disease and spread eastern equine encephalitis virus, commonly called Triple E. That virus is highly fatal to horses and can also be fatal to humans, as it causes brain inflammation.

"There's one on our radar right now. It showed up in the Caribbean, it's called chikungunya," Giordano said. "That's a really nasty one from India.

"We're keeping an eye on it, because that could potentially be the next West Nile in a decade or so."

The symptoms of chikungunya are similar to West Nile virus.

Giordano said since the Niagara Peninsula is a gateway to Ontario, he is also on the lookout for invasive species.

Niagara Region's manager of environmental health Peter Jekel said there have been no West Nile-carrying mosquitoes trapped to date at 21 sites across the region.

"So far this year, we've had no positives — no positive pools at all," he said.

Jekel said the pattern over the past few years saw the identification of positive pools in mid to late July. Niagara Region sends the mosquitoes it traps to an independent lab for testing on a weekly basis.

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Twitter: RobH_Standard

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LOCAL NEWS

■ PELHAM

'Slow it down'

ALLAN BENNER
QMI Agency Niagara

Two Pelham brothers are doing what the town hasn't been able to do.

Inspired by the loss of a beloved furry friend, nine-year-old Connor McLeod and young brother Sebastian, 6, have launched an initiative to help convince drivers to slow down in front of their family's Pancake Lane home.

The brothers were devastated when their kitten Joy was killed two weeks ago. Earlier this year, the family found a stray female cat hanging around a Tim Hortons restaurant.

"We saved her, but we didn't think she was going to make it. She was in bad shape," said their mother, Stefanie McLeod.

"The vet said she's pregnant," Conner said.

Two of the three kittens didn't survive, but Joy made it. She was bottle-fed by the children until she was strong and healthy.

In the months that followed, Joy and the boys were nearly inseparable. They were together again on July 9, playing in their yard. But the sound of an approaching vehicle frightened Joy, and she ran onto the pavement.

The boys stood at the side of the road and watched horrified as a blue pickup truck hit their kitten. Although the family brought Joy to a veterinary clinic, there was little that could be done for her.

The collision broke the kitten's back. Joy died as the veterinarian administered a dose of morphine trying to ease her pain.

Stefanie said her heartbroken sons at first blamed themselves for not having saved the cat. She's extremely thankful they didn't put their own lives in jeopardy.

For years, area residents have been trying to convince town officials to do something to slow the traffic. Brian McLeod, the boys' father, said motorists often race along Pancake Lane thinking it's just a long straight rural road.

"It looks country, but it's not.."

There are many families living in the area, including several with young children. It's also a narrow stretch of pavement with no sidewalks, adding to the concern of pedestrians — including one neighbour who uses a motorized mobility scooter to get around, Brian said.

Sebastian said the he was nearly hit by a speeding car while trick-or-treating last Halloween.

Brian said even when he's been with the boys clearly visible near the roadside, some vehicles "just fly by."

Stefanie said several neighbours formed a committee hoping to identify ways of reducing the speed of traffic. The committee has also met with town staff and Pelham councillors, proposing potential solutions such as speed humps like those installed on nearby Haist St.

Despite assurances that their concerns would be addressed, nothing has been done yet.

That's when Conner and Sebastian decided to take matters into their own hands. With sign paint donated by a local business, the boys spent the past few weeks creating four colourful signs asking motorists to slow down and placed them at the roadside in front of their home.

"We're trying to make a difference on rural roads for cars to stop speeding, and to make it safer for kids and animals," Conner said.

It's not just themselves they're worried about. Sebastian said his cousins as well as friends live in the area.

So far, it seems to be working. Stefanie said neighbours have told her they are seeing people slowing down when they see the signs.

"We saw someone honk at us today when we were putting a sign up, saying 'Good job.'"

They've also established a Facebook page to promote the initiative called Project Slow it Down, as well as a YouTube video with the same name.

"People are listening to two little boys, and yet we were begging the town to do something, and nothing's happening," she said.

allan.benner@sunmedia.ca
Twitter: @abenner1

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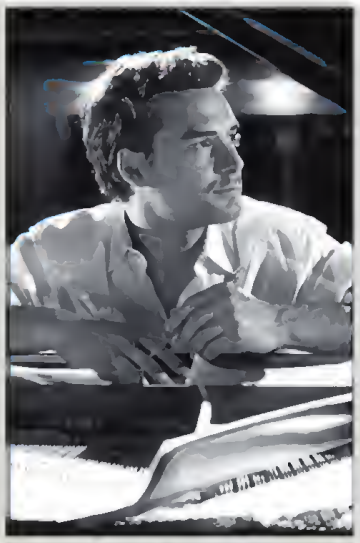
IN BRIEF

Michael Kaeshammer performing at bandshell



MICHAEL KAESHAMMER

Piano-playing singer/songwriter Michael Kaeshammer will be performing Thursday at the Fonthill bandshell.

Kaeshammer has a singular brand of pop-tinged jazz, with hook-laden love songs including A Little Bit of Love.

The German-born, Canadian-bred pianist has recently released his third album on Alert Music records called Kaeshammer.

Thursday's concert runs 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Admission is free, but donations are welcome.

For more information, visit www.fonthillbandshell.com.

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Try these kid-friendly garden projects

THERESA M. FORTE
Special to QMI Agency Niagara

Our West Coast crew has just arrived for their annual summer visit, and suddenly the garden's focus has changed from quiet sanctuary to wonderland. I love to see the garden through my grandchildren's eyes — it's as if I'm exploring my own back yard for the very first time.

In the centre of back yard, the circle garden, populated with towering dill, violet Brazilian verbena and fragrant herbs, is enclosed by ring of silvery-green maiden grass. Three narrow paths lead you to the simple brick path of the inner garden. The children love to push the feathery grass aside and slip into a this secret, fragrant world. Only steps from the patio, this garden serves many masters: oasis for the gardener, butterfly haven and this week as secret hide-away. The turf perimeter serves as a convenient running track for energetic youngsters.

Our first backyard expedition netted several interesting finds: the glorious red petals of last month's poppies had given way to a crop of handsome, plump seed heads. The youngsters helped me find the ripest seed pods (they turn brown as they mature). If you look carefully, you will notice a little cap on each pod covering a row of tiny holes along the top of the pod. Cut off this pod, give it a shake and hundreds of tiny black seeds sprinkle like salt from a salt shaker.

We found the remnants of a tiny, sky blue egg at the edge of the garden. Was it a broken robin's egg? How did it get here? Across the way, a showy black swallowtail butterfly warmed her wings atop a bristly purple coneflower. In no particular hurry, she worked her way across the patch of coneflowers, the nectar and sunshine were to her liking.

I have a set of small, inexpensive pastel glass vases for the patio. Three cousins were each given a pair of scissors and permission to cut their favourite flowers for each vase. "Cut the freshest looking flowers," I told them. The girls had fun experimenting with colour and form and the grown-ups enjoyed the fresh, colourful designs.

Here are a few more fun and economical garden activities for the young at heart:

1. Make a scarecrow or bird scarer. I've got a handful of grapes on my arbour. Every year, birds swoop down and devour the fruit before it ever has a chance to ripen. Old DVD's can be tied together to make a flashy mobile that would rattle in the wind and reflect lots of light, and just maybe, keep the birds at bay. On a similar theme, I like the look of an old fashioned scarecrow perched above my vegetable patch. A pair of two-by-fours, fashioned into a 'T' shape can serve as a form, to be dressed with a discarded shirt, pants and summer hat. An old pillow case, stuffed with straw or packing foam, can be decorated with a face. Let the kids be creative with the outfit.

2. Clay flower pot art. Clean, dry, medium sized clay pots can be painted with tempura paints and then planted with the artists' favourite flower. Let the children choose a young seedling from the garden and transplant the flower to their pot, filled with potting soil. For extra fun, paint a face on the pot and plant with blue fescue or stippa grass 'hair'. Water thoroughly after planting and keep the young plants out of the hot sun until they've settled in.

3. Young botanists club. Equip each youngster with a small butterfly net, specimen jar, plastic binoculars, notebook and pencil (dollar store finds) and set them out to find unusual bugs and seeds in the garden. This project really makes the youngsters (and adults) slow down to see which insects depend on our garden for a home. How many different seeds can they find? At this time of the year, pansy, marigold, calendula, coreopsis, shasta daisy, poppy, day lily and geranium flowers may have set seed. Use the notebook to sketch and take notes about what they found on their expedition.

4. Flower art. Give each child a sheet of card stock or craft paper folded to make a card. Let them collect small flowers, leaves, stems and seed heads, anything that catches their eye, to use as materials for a picture card. Choosing different textures and leaf colours teaches a good lesson about the variety available in the garden — not all leaves are green. Glue the flowers in place with white craft glue and write a message in each card.

5. Pinecone crafts. Let the youngsters collect a bag of pinecones, small twigs and unusual leaves and seedpods. Glue on twigs, leaves and pods to transform the pinecone into weird and wonderful insects. Alternately, choose a large pinecone and tie a long piece of string or wire to the top of the cone. Smear the crevices of the cone with inexpensive peanut butter and then roll the cone in birdseed. Hang the pinecone feeder in a tree and watch who comes by to visit the feeder.

Enjoy these projects with your children or grandchildren this summer — the children's fresh approach will inspire you to see your garden in a new light.

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PELHAM NEWS DATEBOOK

AUGUST 8

CAT ADOPTIONS

Niagara Action for Animals and Niagara Spay Neuter Assistance Program are holding a "Mega Cat/Kitten Adoption Event " this day 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Aug.9 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Fonthill Pet Valu, 20 Canboro Rd., and Welland Pet Valu on Fitch St. Adoption fee of $50 includes spay/neuter, first shots and microchip. Contact N~SNAP 289-897-8514 or NAFA 905-682-4970.

AUGUST 9

MEDITATION

at Pelham Public Library. Marcia leads you through different types of meditations, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Great for beginners and people who have meditated before. Bring a pen and notebook. Cost $3; register ahead at 905-892-6443.

AUGUST 12

USING MEDICATION SAFELY

Whether you're on one medication or many, find out from Shoppers Drug Mart pharmacist Frank Sicoli how to use medications safely. Find out what services are available for seniors and caregivers that can help you manage. His presentation is 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Pelham Public Library. Free. Register ahead at 905-892-6443.

AUGUST 13

GRIMSBY BEACH THEN & NOW

In 1859 a permanent Ontario Methodist Camp Meeting Ground was created at Grimsby Beach. Its success led to the establishment of a whole community. John Allan, who bought a Victorian home there in 1967, will share his photos at Pelham Public Library at 7:30 p.m. Cost $4. Register at 905-892-6443.

AUGUST 18

GIANT BOOK SALE

until Aug. 23 at Pelham Public Library. Books, puzzles, movies, software and much more. On the Saturday fill a grocery bag for $2. Gently-used donations accepted all year. Musty books, encyclopedias, textbooks and magazines not accepted.

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'MIRACLE MOLECULE' SUPERCHARGES CIRCULATION, PROMISING BETTER BLOOD FLOW, BLOOD PRESSURE AND INCREASED MENTAL CLARITY & STAMINA!

Are you concerned with high blood pressure or cholesterol, a lack of stamina and energy, a dip in libido and physical performance, or the increase of "senior moments?" The answer to living without these health concerns has been discovered in what scientists are calling the most important health breakthrough of our time. The discovery starts with nitric oxide (N-O)!

OVER 40 LOSING CRUCIAL RESERVES

N-O is a natural substance produced by the body that has amazing effects on health and circulation. The American Heart Association published one of many studies showing that many people over 40 don't produce enough N-O. In fact, your body produces less than half of what it did at 20.

NOBEL PRIZE WINNING DISCOVERY

Three researchers received the prestigious Nobel Prize for this discovery. One of the winners says, "There may be no disease process where this miracle molecule does not have a protective role".

GOOD NEWS FOR BOOMERS!

Researchers reported that N-O helps with energy levels, blood pressure, cholesterol, joint discomfort, and assisted in strengthening the immune system.

90-SECOND CIRCULATION BOOSTER

Based on the research of Dr. Nathan S. Bryan, PhD, who lectures to doctors around the world about Nitric Oxide, Neogenis® Labs has created a revolutionary lozenge, called Neo 40 daily, that makes it easy to restore N-O levels.

This "fast-dissolve" lozenge restores your N-O to youthful levels by dissolving within 90 seconds and begins to work immediately, which leads to better circulation, for many in as little as 20 minutes.

BETTER CIRCULATION TO WHOLE BODY

Better circulation helps increase stamina, maximizes metabolism, helps manage stress and maintains healthy sexual function.

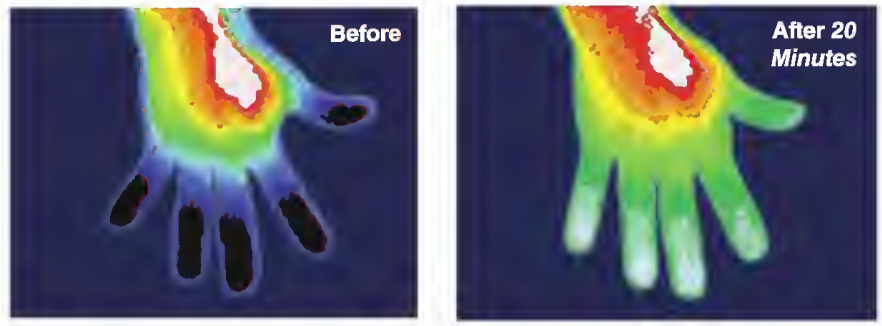
Healthy N-O levels also promote better blood pressure and cholesterol as a result of improved circulation to all major organs.

SURPRISE BENEFITS FOR MEN & WOMEN

"Adequate amounts of Nitric Oxide insure sufficient amounts of blood to flow to the extremities, especially the penis, resulting in an erection. The same applies to women; without proper blood flow to the clitoris, orgasms are difficult," says Dr. Bryan. A boost in Nitric Oxide levels may equal increased sexual sensitivity for men and women.

Tammy from Ontario said, "The first night after my first dose I had improved circulation in my hands. I find the increased circulation is a definite benefit in the bedroom."

"We noticed a difference in my husband's erections within a week. We can't believe how well it works," reports pleased wife Marion S., of New York.



Dark = Low Blood Flow | Light = Increased Blood Flow

Actual Thermographic Image of Hand shows circulation in hands before and after taking Neo 40 daily. On the Left, the fingertips are almost black showing little blood flow. On the Right, lighter colored fingers show increased blood flow after only 20 minutes.

NATURAL RESULTS YOU CAN FEEL

Lee L., from CA was stunned with her results. "I have had knee, leg and shoulder problems for over 10 years. The pain has deprived me of sleep for months!

Ronald D. TX explains, "The results were noticeable overnight. I had more energy and was able to focus more readily."

BEET & BERRY COMBO BOOSTS N-O

Neo 40 daily proprietary combination of N-O boosting nutrients: amino acids, B Vitamins, Vitamin C, and Magnesium are specially formulated with the patent pending combination of red beet and hawthorn berry.

The natural chemistry between them generates Nitric Oxide when dissolved in the mouth. The result is increased oxygen delivery, improved vascular function, enhanced sexual enjoyment, and protection against free radicals.

BOOST BLOOD FLOW & OXYGEN STARTING IN 20 MINUTES!

"I recommend this lozenge because it helps the body restore N-O, which leads to healthy circulation; for most in as little as 20 minutes," affirms Dr. Bryan. The result is increased oxygen delivery, heightened immune function, improved vascular function, and enhanced sexual enjoyment

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- Support cardiovascular and heart health
- Improve sexual performance through improved circulation
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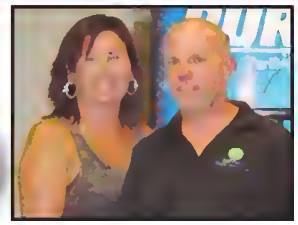

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